A

LETTER

TO THE

Right Hon. EDMUND BURKE,

In REPLY to his

"REFLECTIONS on the REVOLUTION
"in FRANCE, &c."

THE SECOND EDITION;

WITH

CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS.

INCLUDING ALSO

VARIOUS PASSAGES

From Mr. BURKE's former PUBLICATIONS.

By a MEMBER of the REVOLUTION SOCIETY.

Vox audita perit, Litera ſcripta manet.

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By Major Scott

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PREFACE.

THE author of the following letter wrote it under the fulleſt conviction, that Mr. Burke was not under any of thoſe apprehenſions which he affected to feel when he ſent his pamphlet to the preſs.

Either Mr. Burke believes that men of much more weight in the nation than any members of the Revolution Society, have entertained dangerous deſigns againſt the peace and good order of the government, or he has been actuated by thoſe motives, which the

author has ventured to impute to him, in the close of his letter.

Of the Conſtitutional Society, all the author knows is, that the Duke of Richmond, Mr. Sheridan, Sir Cecil Way, and many other gentlemen profeſſing to be the friends of Freedom, attended it a few years ago.

To his Readers he moſt earneſtly recommends the peruſal of Mr. Burke's Thoughts "On the preſent "Diſcontents." They will find that when he publiſhed that work, he conceived the French, that is, the late government of France, to be, "the profeſſed Enemies "of the Freedom of Mankind." He alſo begs them to peruſe all his political Tracts, and particularly his Speech on the Reform of the King's Houſehold, &c.—In page 68, there is a paſſage exceeding in incivility any thing to be met with in Doctor Price's Sermon, he begins—"Kings are naturally Lovers of

" low Company." To any man who has had the honour to be preſented to his Majeſty, or to live in the world, the whole paſſage will appear in the higheſt degree ungenerous and unjuſt, as much ſo as it would be to diſpute the title of the Prince of Wales, to the character of the beſt-bred Gentleman in Europe.

November 6, 1790.

PRE-

PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

MANY Gentlemen who have done the Author the Honour to ſpeak of the following Letter in favorable Terms, have obſerved, that it would be more complete if the ſeveral Paſſages in Mr. Burke's former Publications, to which the Author alludes, were inſerted.—This has been done in the preſent Edition.

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The Public will recollect, that the Reſolutions of the Revolution Society, to which Mr. Burke ſo often alludes, were paſſed on the 4th of November, 1789. Since that Time, the very decided Majority by which Mr. Fox's Motion for the Repeal of the Teſt Act was negatived, and the general Concurrence of the Nation in the Propriety of that Deciſion, muſt convince every rational Man, that the Diſſenters have loſt Ground in the laſt Year.—— Mr. Burke cannot, therefore, dread the Diſſenters.

November 26, 1790.

TO

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDMUND BURKE.

SIR,

I AM one amongſt the thouſands in this nation, who waited with impatience for your long-promiſed Letter, and I have read it over more than once with the utmoſt attention. Had it been merely confined to the affairs of France I ſhould not have troubled you with a ſingle obſervation, but when we are ſo plainly told, that there is a body of men in this country, who wiſh to introduce amongſt us the ſame dreadful confuſions, which have ſo long prevailed in that miſerable kingdom, then, Sir, it is proper that every man who loves our Sovereign Lord the King, and venerates the Britiſh Conſtitution, ſhould be upon

his guard; and if he has hitherto kept bad company, it is full time to quit them, as you ſeem to have done ſome of thoſe with whom you have aſſociated.

I have been for ſome years a member of the Revolution Society, and had the honour to be one of the Stewards a few years ago, when Mr. Pitt was in the zenith of his popularity. Bred a member of the Church of England, I had no curioſity to attend to a political diſcourſe from a Diſſenting Miniſter; but at, and after dinner, there has always been much decent and ſocial mirth.—Our toaſts were truly loyal and conſtitutional, and we had one amongſt others, which, if general report deſerves credit, is invariably omitted in two ſocieties to which you belong.—We, Sir, never ſeparated without drinking a bumper to our beloved monarch, George the Third.—I have heard, that this popular toaſt is not given either at the Whig Club, or at the Annual Weſtminſter Meeting.

Admitting, that laſt year Dr. Price ſtepped far beyond the line of prudence and propriety; or believing that his ſermon does not contain the ſentiments of one in a hundred of the people of England; nay, more, doubting whether a majority of the members of the Revolution Society coincided with him in opinion, although the reſolutions which he moved after a good dinner, met with an unanimous concurrence, let me aſk you where is the

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individual, or even the body of men, whoſe conduct is not at times tinctured with abſurdity? And let me ſay, Sir, in behalf of the Diſſenters, with many of whom I have had much communication, that they are a ſober, pious, honeſt, and conſcientious community. They have been marked of late years at leaſt for their conſiſtency.—I hope and believe, that the ſour, levelling ſpirit, which formerly animated them, does not generally exiſt amongſt them at the preſent moment. You, Mr. Burke, have agreed with them formerly in many points.—*They* oppoſed, with their utmoſt zeal, that mad and deſtructive war, which brought this nation to the brink of ruin.—Do you blame them, becauſe *they* too well remember, *what it is for your intereſt the whole world ſhould forget?* There is a conſiſtency in their conduct, which I in vain look for in your's, or amongſt ſome of your connections.—When, by your own confeſſion, every ſource of taxation was exhauſted in this kingdom, and when by the declaration of your friend, Mr. Fox, peace alone could ſave the country, the Diſſenters, as a body, ſupported the Miniſter, who made that neceſſary peace. The Diſſenters, as a body, reprobated that monſtrous arrangement, by which not only impunity, but remuneration was inſured to the Miniſter, who had ſo often ſmarted under the laſh of your ſatire, whom you had ſo often threatened with the vengeance of an inſulted, exhauſted people, whom you had ſo often pledged yourſelf to call to an account for his actions, *by impeachment.*

The Diſſenters, Sir, could not ſee your union with ſuch a Miniſter (of whom, if they had a bad opinion, Mr. Burke did more to inſtil that bad opinion into them than any other perſon in the world) without withdrawing all confidence from you in future.—Were they ſingular here? Did they not think with a very decided majority of the people of England?

How honourably did *they* act in the next great event that happened in the country.—Having no means of information ſuperior to the generality of their countrymen, they were with them deceived by the repreſentations made by Mr. Burke, of the oppreſſions committed by the Britiſh government on India. But when the maſk was thrown off, when it was palpable that theſe repreſentations were made to facilitate the paſſage of a bill through both Houſes of Parliament, which was to create a fourth eſtate in the country, and to perpetuate the late Adminiſtration in their offices, the Diſſenters acted with a moſt decided majority of the people of England. His Majeſty was enabled to diſmiſs you from his ſervice, and by a proper exertion of a moſt valuable prerogative, to diſſolve that Parliament, which would have reſtored you to power, contrary to the ſenſe of the King and his people.

When Providence afflicted his Majeſty with a ſevere indiſpoſition, what was the conduct of the Diſſenters? Thoſe who had ſeats in Parliament ſupported their true and lawful Sovereign.—Their

Clergy

Clergy offered up fervent prayers to Heaven, for his recovery.—The Diſſenters, as a body, agreed with a prodigious majority of the people of England.—The Revolution Society did the ſame.—*What did the Whig Club?—What did Mr. Burke?* Is it not a notorious fact, that both were leagued with a powerful party, who had planned a complete change in the Adminiſtration of the government and the removal of thoſe Miniſters whom the King had appointed, and the people approved? I enter not into the heart of man, but judging from events that happened under my own eye, I may venture to declare, that your feelings for the ſtate of our Sovereign Lord the King, and of his amiable, afflicted Conſort, were of a different nature indeed from thoſe which you have expreſſed for the fallen majeſty of France.

Shall I, Sir, who was a witneſs to the conduct of the Diſſenters upon theſe great and trying occaſions, give them no credit for the good they did, becauſe it is poſſible, that ſome of them entertain ſpeculative and abſurd notions relative to another country? or, ſhall I ſuſpect them of a deſign to involve this country in confuſion, becauſe in their zeal againſt deſpotiſm they have applauded the conduct of thoſe who have deſtroyed it in France in one ſhape; though many good men fear, that it will rear its head in another infinitely more horrible?

To the act of opening a correſpondence with the actual government of a foreign nation, without the expreſs authority of the government under which

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we live, I was not a party, having been abſent in the laſt year.

But I recollect the time when you did an act, in my opinion, more juſtly reprehenſible, and ſurely as much againſt law.

You boaſted in the Houſe of Commons, in the year 1781, that you had opened a correſpondence with Dr. Franklin, and were actually negociating the exchange of Mr. Laurens for General Burgoyne; yet Dr. Franklin, whatever were his merits, was, by the law of the land at that time, a rebel; as ſuch he was deemed by the Houſe of Commons, whoſe authority you would now ſupport to an extent that would be highly oppreſſive. Thinking with you, as to the folly of the American war, and the ruin it has entailed upon this country, I muſt ſtill allow, that it was the war of the Houſe of Commons; and if many of the high doctrines which you promulgate in the book before us are true, then I repeat, Sir, that your correſpondence with Doctor Franklin in 1781, was infinitely more reprehenſible than that of the Revolution Club with the National Aſſembly in 1789. You have heretofore written upon the diſcontents of the people, and have not always imputed them, in my opinion, to the true cauſe; now it ſuits your argument to deſcribe them as proſperous and happy. Will you, after theſe deviations from *yourſelf*, allow nothing for a too forward zeal in the Diſſenters?

You

You have very much miſtaken the nature of the Revolution Society, if, indeed, ſuch a name can with propriety be given to that meeting of which alone I am a member. The invitation is general—there are a certain number of ſtewards appointed each year—theſe iſſue an advertiſement, inviting *all gentlemen* who wiſh well to the principles of the Revolution, to dine at the London Tavern, where, for ſeven ſhillings and ſixpence, they get a good dinner; as much ſherry, port, and punch as they like; hear ſome very good ſongs, and ſeparate generally well pleaſed with each other, and contented with that government, under which they enjoy a degree of civil and religious liberty, unknown to any other. But as this ſort of advertiſement brings together one hundred and fifty, two hundred, and this year, I believe, nearly three hundred gentlemen, there muſt naturally be ſhades of difference in many points, which an Engliſhman thinks he has a right to diſcuſs as often as he pleaſes; but every perſon preſent each year that I have attended, was animated with the pureſt ſentiments of love and loyalty to the King, and ſeemed to feel the bleſſings he enjoyed under his mild and auſpicious government.

Thus much, Sir, for the nature of our Society.

I have read, and with horror and indignation, the account which you have given us of the dreadful 6th of October, 1789; I have ſo much charity, as to believe that no ſociety of gentlemen, with

whom I have had the honour to aſſociate, could have opened a correſpondence with men, who approved the proceedings of that day, had they really known at the time what horrible exceſſes were committed. I am ſtill to learn that the National Aſſembly did approve thoſe proceedings. I will go a ſtep farther; I ſtill doubt, whether the facts be true or not, to the extent you have ſtated them, and I do ſo, becauſe I have no dependence upon your veracity, for plain and obvious reaſons; I was one amongſt ſome thouſands, who a few years ago heard you in Weſtminſter Hall give a detailed and particular account of many cruelties inflicted upon certain natives of Bengal, by the order of a man called Deby Sing.

It has ſince been proved, by the moſt unqueſtionable evidence, that many of the cruelties, and thoſe in particular which it was moſt offenſive to modeſty, and to common decency to mention, never were committed at all.

Since the publication of your Pamphlet it was the ſubject of converſation between two gentlemen of conſiderable talents—the one had been in France during the ſummer; the other for many years in India.—The firſt declared, that he ſhould pay no credit to what you had ſaid of Mr. Haſtings, becauſe he could convict you of many errors in your French accounts—the other expreſſed equal diſtruſt of the facts mentioned in your book, becauſe he knew

knew your ignorance of a country that he himſelf had long reſided in.

How do I know, that deceptions have not been practiſed upon us, as to the affairs of France, ſimilar to thoſe which you played off in Weſtminſter Hall?

The Diſſenters are a ſober and diſpaſſionate people; they are in the habit of examining ſubjects very cloſely; and they, in common with a majority of the people of England, have kept their eyes upon the ſtory of Deby Sing, as the criterion by which the integrity of Mr. Burke was to be *judged* hereafter.

Borne down and oppreſſed for a time by the power of his proſecutors, and conceiving that a Parliament *could not* be diſſolved before it cloſed a criminal trial which *in its youth it began*, Mr. Haſtings took no notice of this ſtory of Deby Sing in the firſt year; but early in the ſecond, he prayed his proſecutors to bring it forward in ſuch a manner as he might be enabled to refute it. Upon that occaſion, you, Mr. Burke, did affirm, that you would offer evidence upon it; and you did ſo in the following year: but I never yet met with a man of ſo muddy an underſtanding, as not to diſcover at a firſt glance, that there was not a ſingle allegation preferred by the late Houſe of Commons to which any thing relative to Deby Sing could ap-

ply—You had been told ſo a year before, both in the Houſe and out of it. The reſult was clear—the Lords determined without the heſitation of an inſtant, that no evidence, as to Deby Sing, was admiſſible, becauſe nothing that had a reference to him was charged in the articles.

The line for an honeſt man to take was obvious. You ſhould have gone to the Commons—you ſhould have told them, that you had oppoſed the prayer of Mr. Haſtings's petition formerly, becauſe you thought evidence could be received on the buſineſs of Deby Sing, upon the articles as they ſtood; but as the Lords had determined otherwiſe, a regard to your own honour, and to the earneſt requeſt of the defendant, compelled you to lay matters before the Houſe, to induce them to adopt a new article. Is there one amongſt the men differing from you, with whom you have taken ſuch liberties?—Is there one amongſt thoſe who agree with you, who does not in his conſcience believe, that you would have done what it was your duty, at all events to do, had you not had the fulleſt conviction in your own mind, *that the ſtrictures paſſed upon you were founded in truth?* Had you not known, that many of the facts which you ſtated, as if they had been proved and eſtabliſhed by evidence, *never were committed at all*; and that for thoſe that did happen, human ingenuity could not affix blame upon Mr. Haſtings.

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Whenever a body of men, or even an individual, ſhall be accuſed by you, of violating every principle of humanity, the public will be cautious how they give credit to your deſcriptions—The man who has ſo often deceived them, may well be ſuſpected of practiſing deceit upon them in future.

The concluſion you draw * from the conduct of the French, I deny moſt ſolemnly—I deny that "the glory of Europe is gone for ever, or that we "ſhall no more behold that generous loyalty to "rank and ſex—that proud ſubmiſſion—that dig-"nified obedience—that ſubordination of the heart, "which kept alive, even in ſervitude itſelf, the "ſpirit of an exalted freedom."

This paſſage I admire for its ſublimity.—In point of compoſition it is moſt maſterly; but in point of fact, it is not true.—Have you ſo ſoon, Sir, forgot events that ſo recently occurred in our own country? Did you never witneſs the tender, the affectionate ſolicitude of all ranks, degrees, and ages, during the illneſs of our beloved Sovereign, which occurred but a few months before the French Revolution? Have you never ſeen the crowds that filled each day the Levee Room at St. James's? Have you never marked the anxiety upon the countenances of thouſands, to whom it could be of no conſequence whether Mr. Pitt, or Mr. Fox was the

* Page 113.

Miniſter? If you had any other attraction to the theatre than Mrs. Siddons, have you not witneſſed the burſts of loyalty which proceeded from all ranks of people, and how impotent the attempts to impede them in their courſe, while "God ſave the King" reſounded from every ſide?—Was there any want of attention to our amiable Queen in the trying hour of difficulty and diſtreſs?—A competent majority of both Houſes of Parliament ſpoke the ſenſe of ninety-nine out of a hundred of the people, amongſt whom I include *all the Diſſenters*, who loved their Sovereign Lord the King, though they had no cordial regard for his Miniſter, Mr. Pitt.—However ferocious the great and the little vulgar may have been in France, this land the Almighty in his great providence will, I truſt, long preſerve, famous as it is at the preſent moment, for love and loyalty to the King, and for an ardent zeal in the ſupport of civil and religious liberty.

Nor were theſe generous and affectionate feelings confined to our own country—My reſpect for the King of the French (as they now call him) is conſiderably heightened by a recollection of the ſolicitude which he expreſſed for our Sovereign.—All Europe felt for our Father and our King.—America, which you once denominated the firſt commonwealth upon earth, forgot its prejudices, and prayed for the recovery of a good man and a good King.—India mourned at his illneſs, and rejoiced when his health was reſtored.—The Princes, the Sovereigns,

vereigns, and the people, who have told the Britiſh nation, that men ignorant of their laws, manners, and cuſtoms, have impeached the man it ſhould have rewarded, ſent, by the firſt opportunity, their congratulations to the foot of the throne; and one con ſiderable merchant amongſt them, gladdened the hearts of many, whom folly or misfortune had ſubjected to the miſeries of a priſon, by liberating them from a loathſome confinement.—Such was the conduct of the habitable globe, when a King, who has invariably made the laws the rule of his action, and upon whoſe private character malice itſelf cannot affix a ſtain, was reſtored to health, and to an affectionate and grateful people.

The diſtreſſes which the Sovereigns of France, and the ariſtocratic families have ſuſtained, no man, not even Mr. Burke, can feel for more than I do.—But can I forget to what theſe diſtreſſes are owing? that they had their origin in a breach of faith, and that the ſeeds of liberty were firſt ſown acroſs the Atlantic, where a rooted enmity to England induced the King to ſend his ſoldiery, as contrary to every principle of that ſound policy which ſhould actuate an arbitrary Monarch, looking to his own ſecurity, as to juſtice? When I reflect upon this circumſtance, and that our laſt debt of one hundred millions is as much owing to the treachery of France, as to the imbecility or miſconduct of your friends, I can look calmly into facts, through that high-ſounding

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language in which you have cloathed them, and can diſtinguiſh between the late Government of France and the People.

I am not ſurprized that Lord North ſo long doubted, as to the reality of a Treaty between France and America, foreſeeing as he did, that ſuch a Treaty was big with ruin to a deſpotic ſtate, but if in the end it ſhall overturn that Government, which by your own account "was the profeſſed enemy to the "freedom of mankind," the event is moſt fortunate indeed, for France and for Europe.

To this country it is of little moment, whether the people of France reſiſted without ſufficient provocation, or whether their National Aſſembly have acted abſurdly or unjuſtly. They may ſay, that nineteen out of twenty of the inhabitants are with them—they may ſay, that they had no firſt principles to reſort to—that many centuries had elapſed ſince they could boaſt of any conſtitution at all, and that when they had one, it was very defective.—The Dutch formed a conſtitution entirely new, in the ſixteenth century.—The Americans, the firſt commonwealth in the world, by your own account, have done the ſame now. There is, in fact, no government in France at preſent; but is it to be ſuppoſed, that they will not ſucceed in forming a conſtitution, becauſe they have hitherto been involved in difficulties ariſing from the magnitude of their public debt? The ſub-

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ject is indeed of conſequence, if our own happy eſtabliſhment, both in church and ſtate, were endangered by the conduct of our neighbours.—But God forbid, Sir, that the Engliſh ſhould be compoſed of ſuch contemptible materials, as rendered them unfit to diſcuſs any topic. Why do we love our own government, as eſtabliſhed by law? Becauſe we believe it to be the beſt in the world; and the madneſs of France, if ſhe be as you repreſent her, will confirm us in that opinion. Our neighbour's houſe has long been on fire, but we need no engine to play upon our own, becauſe it is compoſed of materials that fire cannot penetrate.

Are we not indebted to the virtuous ſtruggles of our anceſtors, for the moſt perfect freedom that any nation under Heaven enjoys at the preſent moment? The rankeſt Tories in the kingdom—thoſe who ſhall moſt loudly applaud the high doctrines, which for the firſt time in your life you have maintained, will allow, that the government of Charles the Firſt was an oppreſſive tyranny previous to the civil war. I admire in common with a majority of my countrymen, the preſent government of the church; and long, long may the church flouriſh. But do I wiſh to ſee that eccleſiaſtical oppreſſion reſtored, under which the people groaned before the grand rebellion? Granted, that the deſpotiſm of the long Parliament, and of Cromwell, was more grinding than the comparatively milder tyranny of the Firſt Charles; it is

ſtill very generally allowed, that to the reſiſtance of thoſe days we owe our preſent happy conſtitution; which, after all, was not fixed, but by a ſecond revolution in the government.

I will neither follow you nor Dr. Price through a long inquiry into the nature of the rights which we acquired at the Revolution; but this I affirm, that there is not a ſingle point in which the Members of the Whig Club and of the Revolution Society do not agree. The Princes of the Brunſwick line have made the laws their rule. It would be treaſon to doubt that they will continue to do ſo. Every good ſubject therefore owes allegiance to the King, and will ſupport him with his fortune and his life. But, Sir, though there is not one of the King's prerogatives that I would touch, and for an admirable reaſon which your friend Mr. Fox has aſſigned, becauſe they are a truſt for the people's good, and have ever been conſcientiouſly exerciſed by His Majeſty for that laudable end, let me aſk you, if every part of our conſtitution is ſo perfect, that no improvement can be adopted? There are points upon which the beſt and the wiſeſt men in England have materially differed. The Miniſter and Mr. Fox, the rival ſuns, agree with Dr. Price, that the inadequate repreſentation of the people in Parliament is a ſerious grievance; ſome very ſenſible men think that Parlirments ſhould be triennial; others, annual —I think at preſent with you, that neither the mode

of

of returning Members to Parliament, nor the period for which they are ſent there, ſhould be altered; but there can be no danger in agitating theſe points. Many arguments may be urged by ſuch men as Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt, which have never yet occurred to my mind, and which may convince me that the people are robbed of their rights, when a noble Earl can ſend a fiat to a Yorkſhire borough, to manufacture Mr. Burke into a Member of Parliament. They may perſuade me, that it is both abſurd and unjuſt to allow a Baron Bold, to place Mr. George Harding behind the Treaſury Bench, by ſending half a dozen footmen into a corn field on the day of an election, before they ſerve up his Lordſhip's dinner. Are we made of ſuch miſerable materials, that we cannot venture to conſider fairly and fully the conveniences and inconveniences of the preſent mode of repreſentation, becauſe France is convulſed to its centre?

You well know, Sir, that Mr. Pitt imputed the loſs of America, and the alarming amount of our National Debt, to the corruption of Parliament, and that corruption he traced to the inadequate repreſentation of the people in Parliament. You who talk ſo loudly *now* of our *affection for Parliaments*, traced our misfortunes to the ſame cauſe, the corruption of the Houſes of Commons. Yet now we are ſo proſperous, and ſo happy, that the diſſenters are criminal for adopting upon this important ſubject, the ſentiments of

the firſt men in the nation, in point of rank and talents.

Could I think that wiſer, better, or more virtuous men, if ſuch are to be found in the nation, would be returned to Parliament, than thoſe who are in it at preſent, by the adoption of Mr. Pitt's plan (what Dr. Price's may be I know not) I would certainly vote for it.—Were the ſpirit of an act now upon the Statute Book, carried into effect, it would, in my humble opinion, do more real ſervice to the country, than any plan yet propoſed. I would have no man a Member of the Houſe of Commons, who did not, bona fide, poſſeſs ten thouſand pounds in money or land; and the moment he had leſs, which could eaſily be diſcovered, it ſhould incapacitate him from remaining in the Houſe.—It requires a certain fortune to be the director of a trading company, and members of Parliament ought to be more independent than any people in the kingdom.

There is no part of your book which ſurprizes me more than the new-born zeal and affection diſplayed in it, for Parliaments; poſſibly you may have admired at all times the inſtitution of the Houſe of Commons; but of this I am ſure, that there is no man in this kingdom who has treated the material part of that Houſe, the Majority, with ſuch ſovereign contempt as you have done, for a long ſeries of years. I pray you to read over what you ſay of the

Houſe of Commons in your "Thoughts on the "preſent Diſcontents." Have you no recollection of your opinion of the Houſe of Commons through every ſtage of the American War? Did you never tell Lord North, that he would carry on that war "as "long as he could find money to bribe Gentlemen to "ſay they believed him?" Did you not once tell Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas, that they had propoſed, and the majority that they had adopted, a ſcheme "that "would have diſgraced the infamous reign of Nero?" Allow me to ſay, Sir, that you over-rate the affection of the people for Parliaments; and permit me to ſay alſo, that no man in the kingdom has done ſo much as yourſelf to induce the people to look with leſs veneration upon the proceedings of Parliament, than they formerly did.

This monſtrous ſyſtem of iniquity which you imputed to Mr. Pitt, in the laſt Parliament, you traced to a very extraordinary ſource, to the Miniſter's wiſh to repay the friends of Mr. Atkinſon for bringing Members into the Houſe. But as circumſtances change, men change alſo; and when Mr. Pitt mounted you upon your favourite hobby-horſe, you diſcovered, by one glance, that we were a proſperous and a happy people—averſe to changes of any kind—and fondly devoted to Parliaments.

I ſhould be very glad to aſk Mr. Burke, what events have lately happened to make us, in his opinion,

ſo proſperous, and ſo happy? If there was cauſe for diſcontent twenty years ago, that cauſe has been conſiderably increaſed. Many years have elapſed ſince you told us that we were ruined, beyond redemption gone, and that the Head of the Miniſter could alone ſatisfy you for the miſeries he had brought upon the country. Subſequent to that declaration America has been totally loſt; ſome of our Weſt-India Iſlands ſurrendered to the French; and if India were in the miſerable ſtate that you have deſcribed it, we can draw no reſources from that country. Is that farce of reform which you propoſed in 1780 leſs neceſſary now, than it was then? Have not the Exciſe Laws been moſt alarmingly, though neceſſarily extended? Is not every luxury, every comfort of life, taxed to its utmoſt bearing? Can we eat, drink, walk, ride, or even enjoy the light of Heaven, without encountering a public collector? Could Doctor Price alter the nature of man, could he ſubdue the paſſions of envy, malice, and detraction amongſt politicians, or rivalry amongſt nations, he would do a real ſervice to his country, and to mankind. The ſort of union which he fondly, and, I fear, vainly expects to ſee accompliſhed between Great Britain and France, Mr. Pitt looked to alſo when he framed his Commercial Treaty; and could it be accompliſhed, it muſt inevitably give peace to the world.

Twenty years ago you allowed that the people of this land had real cauſe to be diſcontented. To be ſure, Mr. Burke, we have proſpered exceedingly in

the

the laſt " twenty years."—Our empire is diſmembered, we have doubled our debt, we have doubled the national expenditure; and ingenuity is almoſt exhauſted in contriving ways and means to get money from us to ſupply the neceſſities of the State.

But that you may not ſay that I have in any inſtance acted unfairly by you, I ſhall bring your preſent ſentiments, and your former ſentiments into one point of view, deſiring my readers to take notice, that our debt is doubled, and our Empire in the ſame proportion diminiſhed, between the period of the publication of the two pamphlets.

Page 66 of Mr. Burke's Reflections publiſhed in 1790—" The power of the Houſe of Commons, " *direct*, or *indirect*, is indeed great, and *long may it* " *be able to preſerve its greatneſs*, and the ſpirit be- " longing to true greatneſs to the full."

Page 11 of Mr. Burke's thoughts on the preſent diſcontents, publiſhed in 1770—" Againſt the be- " ing of Parliament I am ſatisfied no deſigns have " ever been entertained ſince the Revolution. Every " one muſt perceive that it is ſtrongly the intereſt of " the Court, to have ſome ſecond cauſe interpoſed, " *between the Miniſters and the People.* The Gentle- " men of the Houſe of Commons have an intereſt " equally ſtrong in ſuſtaining their part of that inter- " mediate cauſe. However, they may hire out the " *uſufruct* of their voices, they never will part with the " *fee* and *inheritance.* Accordingly thoſe who have

" been

" been of the moſt known devotion to the will and " pleaſure of a Court, have at the ſame time *been* " *moſt forward in aſſerting* an high authority in the " Houſe of Commons; when they knew who were " to uſe that authority, and how it was to be em- " ployed, they thought it could never be carried " too far. It muſt always be the wiſh of an uncon- " ſtitutional ſtateſman, that an Houſe of Commons, " who are entirely dependent on him, *ſhould have* " *every right of the people dependent upon their pleaſure.* " It *was ſoon diſcovered that the forms of a free, and the* " *ends of an arbitrary Government, were things not alto-* " *gether incompatible.*"

Page 26 of the ſame work—" Any new powers " exerciſed in the Houſe of Lords, *or in the Houſe of* " *Commons*, or by the Crown, ought certainly to ex- " cite the moſt vigilant, and anxious jealouſy *in a free* " *people. Even a new and unprecedented courſe of action* " *in the whole Legiſlature, without great and evident* " *reaſon, may be the ſubject of much uneaſineſs.*"

Page 83 of Mr. Burke's Reflections, publiſhed in 1790—" I ſhall only ſay here, in juſtice to that " old-faſhioned Conſtitution, *under which we have* " *long proſpered*, that our Repreſentation has been " found perfectly adequate to all the purpoſes for " which a Repreſentation of the People can be de- " ſired, or deviſed. *I defy the enemies of our con-* " *ſtitution to ſhew the contrary.*"

Page 85 of Mr. Burke's Reflections publiſhed in 1790—" Whilſt they are poſſeſſed of theſe notions, it " is vain to talk to them of the practice of their an- " ceſtors, the fundamental laws of their country, the " fixed form of a conſtitution, whoſe merits are con- " firmed by long experience, *and an increaſing public* " *ſtrength and national proſperity.*"

Page 56 of Mr. Burke's Thoughts on the preſent Diſcontents, publiſhed in 1770—

" The Court Party reſolve the whole *into faction.* " Having ſaid ſomething before upon this ſubject, I " ſhall only obſerve here, that when they give this " account of the prevalence of faction, they preſent " no very favourable aſpect of the confidence of the " people on their own government.---They may be " aſſured, that however they may amuſe themſelves " with a variety of proſpects for ſubſtituting ſome- " thing in the place of that great and only founda- " tion of government, *the confidence of the people,* " every attempt will but make their condition " worſe.---When men imagine their food is only " a cover for poiſon, and when they neither love nor " truſt the hand that ſerves it, it is not the name of " the roaſt beef of Old England, that will perſuade " them to ſit down to the table that is ſpread for " them. When the people conceive that laws and " tribunals, *and even popular aſſemblies, are perverted* " *from the ends of their inſtitution, they find in theſe*

" *names*

" *names* of degenerated eſtabliſhments, only new " motives, was to diſcontent."

Page 67 of the ſame work—" The virtue, ſpirit, " and eſſence of a Houſe of Commons conſiſts in its " being the expreſs image of the feelings of the na- " tion. It was not inſtituted to be a controul upon the " people, *as* " *of late has been taught by a doctrine of* " *the moſt pernicious tendency*. It was deſigned as a con- " troul *for* the people.

Page 68 of the ſame work—" But an addreſſing " Houſe of Commons, and a petitioning nation, an " Houſe of Commons full of confidence, *when the na-* " *tion is plunged in deſpair*; in the utmoſt harmony with " Miniſters, *whom the people regard with the utmoſt* ab- " horrence; who vote thanks, *when the people calls upon* " *them for impeachments*; who are eager to grant when " the general voice demands account; who in all diſ- " putes between the people and adminiſtration, perſe- " vere againſt the people, who puniſh their diſorders, " but refuſe even to inquire into the provocations to " them; *this is an unnatural*, a *monſtrous ſtate of things*, " *in this conſtitution*. Such an aſſembly may be a " great, wiſe, awful ſenate, *but it is not to any popu-* " *lar purpoſe*, an Houſe of Commons.

Page 100 of the ſame work—" Indeed, in the " ſituation in which we ſtand, with an immenſe " revenue, an enormous debt, mighty eſtabliſh- " ments; Government itſelf a great merchant and a

" great

" great banker; I ſee no other way for the preſervation
" of a decent attention to public intereſt in the repre-
" ſentatives, *but the interpoſition of the body of the people*
" *itſelf*, when all appear by ſome flagrant and noto-
" rious act, by ſome capital innovation, that theſe re-
" preſentatives are going to overleap the fence of law,
" and to introduce an arbitrary power. This interpoſi-
" tion is a moſt unpleaſant remedy; but if it be a legal
" remedy, it is intended on ſome occaſion to be uſed,
" and then only, when it is evident that nothing
" elſe, *can hold the Conſtitution to its true principles.*

" The diſtempers of monarchy, were the great
" ſubjects of apprehenſion, and redreſs, *in the laſt*
" *century. In this, the diſtempers of parliament.*

" It is not in Parliament alone that the remedy
" for Parliamentary diſorders can be completed---
" *hardly, indeed, can it begin there.* Until a confi-
" dence in government is re-eſtabliſhed, the people
" ought to be excited to a more ſtrict and detached
" attention to the conduct of their Repreſentatives,
" ſtandards, for judging more ſyſtematically upon
" their conduct, ought to be ſettled *in the meetings*
" *of counties and corporations. Frequent and correct*
" *Liſts of the Voters in all important queſtions ought to*
" *be procured.*

Though an enthuſiaſtic admirer of King William, and grateful for the bleſſings we owe to his exertions, I cannot be inſenſible to certain inconveniences which he entailed upon us. In the reigns of the

Stuarts, and even of the Tudors, the Commons kept a ſtrict guard upon the purſe of the people; and James the Second, bigotted, tyrannical, and abſurd as he was, left the nation unincumbered with debt. Whether the conſtitution of the Commons was altered by an increaſe of the monied intereſt, or the minds of men underwent a change from the period of the Revolution, I know not; but the fact is, that every ſucceeding Miniſter has obtained without difficulty (with few and trifling exceptions) as much money as he choſe to aſk for; and I believe there is not a country in the world in which the public treaſure has been ſo profuſely ſquandered as in England, beginning with the immenſe ſums which our deſtructive wars have coſt, and carrying it through all the gradations, until I come to the thirty-five thouſand pounds which the people have paid for the entertainment you have afforded them three years ſucceſſively in Weſtminſter Hall.

And this, Mr. Burke, brings me to the conſideration of a ſubject which, I aſſure you, has made ſo deep an impreſſion upon the People of England, that it will not be eradicated from their minds, even by the many valuable truths contained in the book before me.

Is there a man who ſeriouſly reflects upon the Impeachment of Mr. Haſtings, who, with all his affection for Parliaments, will ſay, that our Conſtitution is not radically defective? And is there a man of

common

common ſenſe, common honour, or common honeſty, in the kingdom, who does not reprobate that ſluggiſh proceeding? Is there a Member of Parliament, conſcious of the abuſe which has prevailed, who will not ſtep forward in ſupport of a law that ſhall prevent ſuch an abuſe in future? Are not the firſt principles of the Britiſh Conſtitution, is not Magna Charta, the Bill of Rights, and the Reſolutions of the Houſe of Commons, vitiated by the proceedings upon that trial? And what Britiſh ſubject can ſay, that he is ſafe in his perſon or his property, until a fit remedy is provided? To this trial you have alluded in more than one paſſage in your book. In the cloſe of it you ſay, that to conſider the affairs of France, "You have ſnatched from your ſhare in "the endeavours which are uſed by good men "to diſcredit opulent oppreſſion, the hours you have "employed in their affairs."

I wiſh to meet you and the whole world in any thing that I ſhall ſay on this ſubject, with fair argument. You have one mode of revenge, which I deprecate. I hope it is not libellous to ſpeak with decent freedom of the acts of a paſt Houſe of Commons: if it is, you may bring me before the preſent Houſe. You, who, if to deliver your thoughts to the public, of public men, and public bodies, and public acts, with the utmoſt freedom, is to be a libeller, have been the moſt outrageous libeller of the preſent age; you, I ſay, may complain of this pamphlet; if you do, I promiſe you the author

ſhall not flinch from the charge, but will inſtantly avow himſelf.

I will not ſuſpect you of writing ſo much againſt the prevalent opinions of France, on account of the admiration which the people of that country have expreſſed for the character of Mr. Haſtings. But in this I pay no compliment to your candour, becauſe the Ariſtocrates and the Democrates agree moſt perfectly in opinion relative to the Impeachment; and they do ſo, becauſe there was not a Frenchman in any rank, or ſtation in India, during the late war, who did not look upon Mr. Haſtings in his public character as their greateſt enemy, though they privately reſpected, and eſteemed him.

But, Sir, to compare your conduct with the admirable obſervations which you have made upon the proceedings of the National Aſſembly,

Page 188, you ſay—"Men have ſometimes been "led by degrees, ſometimes hurried into things, the "whole of which, if they could have ſeen together, "they never would have permitted the moſt remote "approach."

This is preciſely the apology which every fair man will make for the conduct of the Britiſh nation in impeaching Mr. Haſtings. That Impeachment turned upon the moſt extraordinary circumſtance (as you well know) that ever happened in any country.

country. I look in vain for any thing ſimilar to it in the National Aſſembly of France.

You charged Mr. Haſtings with a crime in impoſing an annual tax upon a zemindar in India during a war, which, by the conſtitution of the country, and the tenure under which the zemindar held, he had, as the charge affirmed, no right to pay. The whole article, which contained many points, turned upon this one circumſtance.

Mr. Fox ſupported the charge. Mr. Pitt vehemently oppoſed it; but as the motion was, that ſomething was criminal, and as Mr. Pitt ſaw criminality in the amount of the fine which Mr. Haſtings intended to impoſe upon Cheyt Sing for his diſobedience, theſe two Gentlemen joined in the general vote, and a criminal charge was afterwards preferred to the Houſe of Lords in the name of all the Commons of Great Britain, which the Houſe did not vote, except in the general way that I have mentioned.

Was it, Sir, let me aſk you, let me aſk any man poſſeſſing three grains of common ſenſe, for the honour and dignity of this nation, that it ſhould arraign a man as a criminal for exerciſing what he conceived to be a right of taxation, for exerciſing what the Miniſter of the country thought to be a right, for exerciſing it three years ſucceſſively with the knowledge of a former Miniſter? Was it, I ſay, Sir, pro-

per

per to do this, without coming to a ſpecific vote upon that queſtion of right, unmixed with other matter? Or are we, from a dread of innovation, to apply no remedy that may prevent ſo great a wrong in future? What has the National Aſſembly done that is more ſtrikingly abſurd, more alarmingly unjuſt, than this?

You tell us in the next page (189)—"that no "country in which population flouriſhes, and is in "progreſſive improvement, can be under a *very* "miſchievous government."

The fact is true; but allowing it to be ſo, Mr. Burke, what man living ſhall be ſhameleſs enough to offer an apology for your conduct?

You are poſſeſſed of full, clear, poſitive, undeniable proof, that Bengal conſiderably increaſed in population and agriculture, during the thirteen years adminiſtration of Mr. Haſtings. Of this I think you had very ſufficient proof, when you drew articles which deſcribe the depopulated and ruined ſtate of that country. But you had eſtabliſhed the fact by your own witneſſes in Weſtminſter Hall, prior to your moving, that the Managers ſhould abandon as many of the articles as they pleaſed; "but without yielding up the truth and importance "of any of them."

However,

However, to put the matter out of all diſpute, and that it may not reſt ſolely on my aſſertion, take the following extract from the members of the trial:

Queſtion to Captain Edwards, *in the firſt year of a criminal trial*, 20th of May, 1788.

Q. What was the general ſtate of Bengal, Bahar and Oriſſa, when you left India in 1783?

A. It was in a very flouriſhing ſtate.

Q. Did the natives appear to be happy or otherwiſe?

A. They always appeared to be very happy.

Queſtions to John Shore, Eſq. 2d of June, 1790, *the third year of a criminal trial.*

Q. Whether you are well acquainted with the general ſtate of India, and in particular with that part of it which is ſubject to the government of the Eaſt India Company?

A. I believe I am.

Q. Has not property been more ſecure, and individuals been leſs oppreſſed under the Britiſh Government, than under the government of their Nabobs?

A. I have not a doubt of it.

Q. Are not the Natives more happy?

A. I believe they are.

Q. Since the year 1770, to the time when you left India, had not the agriculture, population, and the general proſperity of the country increaſed?

A. I have recorded that as my opinion, in the proceedings at Bengal, and I now adhere to it.

Now, Mr. Burke, will you allow me to aſk you on what principle of juſtice, your conduct is to be reconciled. Read the articles that you preſented to the laſt Houſe of Commons, and read the evidence by which you ſupported them. You have aſſerted, that "the welfare of the natives had been deeply affected, "the intereſt of the Eaſt India Company materially "injured, and the honour of the nation wantonly "violated, by the acts of Mr. Haſtings." You have proved, that he ſucceeded to that Government when the total revenues were little more than three millions, and that he left it with a revenue of more than five. You have proved that the people were happy, and that agriculture and population had increaſed. Yet you yourſelf moved for leave to abandon articles aſſerting the reverſe without giving up *their truth*; and in ſpeaking of France, you acknowledge no country in which population flouriſhes can be under a very miſchievous government. How are theſe abſurdities to be reocnciled? or iis this not a matter to be agitated in a free country?

Is ſuch monſtrous injuſtice to be tolerated, becauſe France, in reſiſting oppreſſion, has proceeded to outrage? Defend us from ſuch Tory doctrines, though proceeding from the member of a Whig Club!

In page 230, you tell us—"Juſtice is itſelf the "great ſtanding policy of civil ſociety; *and any*

"*eminent*

" *eminent departure from it, under any circumſtances,*
" lies under the ſuſpicion of being no policy at all."

If you have not exhauſted all your fine feelings in the cauſe of France, let me, Sir, call your attention for a few minutes to the cauſe of Great Britain. The quotation I have made ought to be inſcribed in letters of gold in Weſtminſter Hall.—But what has been the juſtice of that Mr. Burke, who has ſo truly told us what juſtice is.

An Engliſh gentleman had for thirteen years governed the moſt conſiderable foreign dominion of Great Britain; in that period his conduct had been alternately cenſured and commended, by miniſters, and by his conſtituents; but at the cloſe of his government, he received the unanimous thanks of his maſters, ſanctioned by the King's Miniſters, for his long, faithful, and able ſervices.

You ſaw his conduct in another point of view—you preferred charges againſt him, which were voted in a manner ſo perfectly novel, ſo diametrically oppoſite to that juſtice which you ſo well deſcribe, that though the Parliament is dead that voted them, my reſpect for the very name of Parliament precludes me from ſtating all I know, and can prove upon the ſubject.

The Impeachment, however, ſuch as it was, was voted, and the trial began.—Mr. Haſtings poſſeſſes

the rights of an Engliſhman—Under Magna Charta he was intitled to equal and ſpeedy juſtice.—In violation of the firſt principle of the Britiſh Conſtitution (and without ſuch a principle no conſtitution is worth a farthing) a diſtinction was ſet up, which no lawyer will maintain. His proſecutors deſcribed themſelves, as armed in ſome degree with the robes of magiſtracy. If this be found doctrine, let it be defined hereafter in a ſtatute.

The next right of an Engliſhman is, to have *ſpeedy juſtice*, and this right was recognized by the Houſe of Commons themſelves, when they declared in 1701-2, "that in all accuſations by impeachment, "or otherwiſe, it was the undoubted right of an "Engliſhman to be brought to a ſpeedy trial, in "order to be acquitted or condemned." Such being the declaration of Parliament, it was ſurely incumbent upon them ſo to weigh the indictment they preferred, that their reſolution ſhould not of neceſſity be a mere mockery. It was neceſſary for them ſo to ſelect their Managers, that uſeleſs time ſhould not be expended by the introduction of matter quite extraneous to the indictment. But you took up four entire days in deſcriptions totally foreign to the impeachment. The trial then began, and proceeded to the cloſe of a very long ſeſſions, with going through one-tenth of the articles. Here, Sir, was a moſt alarming and dreadful precedent eſtabliſhed. When our anceſtors in the reign of King William came to the reſolution which I have quoted

above, did they conceive the poſſibility of the event that has happened?

A ſecond year of the trial then commenced, and by this time all India was rouſed in the cauſe of Mr. Haſtings. Equally proſecuted by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox—deprived of all power, and of all poſſibility of a return to power, ſtill the various deſcriptions of men, compoſing the natives of Indoſtan, did not forget the obligations they owed to him. Theſe teſtimonials were laid upon the table of the Houſe of Commons—they were quoted by a Member, as the firmeſt ſupport of the truth of Mr. Dundas's ſtatements, who had deſcribed Bengal to be the moſt flouriſhing country in India. With all my affection for Parliaments, I muſt bluſh and feel for abſurdity wherever I meet it. And what could ſtrike the aſtoniſhed world with ſo much ſurprize, as to hear one of the Miniſters of the Crown running al moſt riot in praiſe of the paſt and preſent government of India to a full Houſe, in the ſame day that you, the delegate of that Houſe, and ſpeaking in their name, had affirmed, in a high court of juſtice, that the country was ruined and depopulated.

Who is there amongſt us, or in France, poſſeſſing three grains of common ſenſe, and a ſtill leſs proportion of common honeſty, who muſt not be ſtruck with indignation, when he reflects, that on the one hand you, the delegate of the Commons, have publicly declared in a court of juſtice, that

ſuch was the tyranny and oppreſſion practiſed by Mr. Haſtings, for a ſeries of years, upon the natives of Bngal, "that they felt relieved from a weight un-"der which they had long groaned, when he depart-"ed;" while on the other, there have been upon the table of the Commons, for two years, atteſtations from men of all ranks and deſcriptions in India, in favour of this tyrant and oppreſſor, as you termed him, affirming, in direct terms, that ignorant and uninformed men had brought falſe accuſations againſt him—that the competency of this evidence has not been diſputed, that its truth has never been controverted, that the channel of its tranſmiſſion (Lord Cornwallis) is the beſt voucher for its authority, that it has been referred to in argument, that the Houſe has been called upon to ſay which they will believe, Mr. Burke or the Miniſter of India,

Utrum Horum mavis accipe;

where two accounts are ſo manifeſtly contradictory, both cannot be true. Who is there, I ſay, Sir, reflecting upon theſe facts, who does not lament the abſurdity into which we have fallen; and who amongſt us will not fully ſubſcribe to the truth of your aſſertion, that men are led on ſtep by ſtep, to acts at which they would revolt, if they ſaw their whole extent at once? I believe in my conſcience, that there are not ten gentlemen in England who would have voted to impeach any man living, had they conceived that his acquittal or condemnation would have been protracted beyond one ſeſſion of Parliament.

I aut

I am very credibly informed, that ſome of the leaders of the French National Aſſembly have doubted of the excellence of the Britiſh conſtitution from this ſingle circumſtance.—They have ſaid, it muſt be radically defective, when any body of men profeſſing to proſecute for crimes in a court of juſtice, ſhall be ſo privileged, that they may protract the deciſion to any period they pleaſe; and where the perſon accuſed has not a chance of being heard, unleſs Heaven ſhould inſpire the conductors of his proſecution, thoſe who have an intereſt in his conviction, with ſentiments of juſtice and moderation.—*They* have obſerved, that even in the midſt of *their* convulſions, they acted upon different principles.—They brought a general officer to his trial, at a time when of all others a fair deciſion was not to be expected; and his crime was of a moſt ſerious nature to them—obedience of orders, which if his troops had followed him, would have deluged the city of Paris in blood, and prevented what they call a glorious revolution. Yet under ſuch circumſtances, and in ſuch a country, this officer was fairly tried, and honourably acquitted.

They have alſo obſerved, that not only humanity has been outraged during the progreſs of this trial, but a mode of ſpeech was adopted, which has ſeldom been practiſed even in their motley aſſembly.—They have ſaid, that there is not an epithet diſgraceful to the human character—there is not an expreſſion coarſe and illiberal, which, be the provocation what

it

it will, is never uſed by a gentleman to a gentleman, in the common intercourſe of life—there is not an inſult poor and unmanly, which has not been applied.—To whom?—to a man doomed for three years ſucceſſively to hear all the abuſe, without the privilege of a reply—to a man, in whoſe favour the people of Europe, and of India, are united—to a man, againſt whom they believe nothing criminal can be proved, becauſe nothing criminal has been proved, in ſo long a proſecution.

Theſe, Mr. Burke, are the ſentiments of the leading men amongſt the French; for however violent they may have been in ſome of their proceedings, they have diſplayed a marked attention to ſuch Engliſh gentlemen as curioſity has led to croſs the water, ſince the government has been in their hands, and have communicated very freely with them.

And in this enlightened age, ſhall we have ſo much of the old monkiſh ſuperſtition about us, as to be afraid to examine ſuch parts of our Conſtitution as are really defective, leſt we ſhould give an advantage to the Diſſenters? What a miſtake have I been in for a ſeries of years! I have been told, that though we had the beſt of Kings upon the Throne, his Majeſty had been ſerved by the worſt Miniſters that ever diſgraced a country. That theſe men for above twenty years followed a plan originally laid down by the Earl of Bute, tending to deſtroy

ſtroy that confidence which the people ought to place in their governors, to introduce diſcord amongſt the beſt families in the kingdom, and utterly to diſcredit all patriotiſm, and public virtue. That in the proſecution of this plan theſe Miniſters had ſo managed or corrupted the Houſe of Commons, that it was merely aſſembled to ſanction their decrees, and to plunder the people of their property. That theſe Miniſters, in order to preſerve themſelves in power, had attempted to ſubjugate America, as the firſt ſtep for the introduction of deſpotiſm into England; but that America, by a juſt and glorious reſiſtance, a reſiſtance which gave pleaſure to every good man, had utterly deſtroyed ſo nefarious a plan, though at an expence to England which ſhe never can recover. And where, Sir, do you think I picked up theſe abſurd notions of men and things? From certain political pamphlets, and parliamentary ſpeeches, which were publiſhed by one Mr. Edmund Burke, the celebrated gentleman who now cries aloud, Fear God, and honour the King; and every good man will go with him ſo far. But he has unſaid all that he has been telling us for twenty years. We are, we ever have been, a proſperous and happy people. Our Miniſters virtuous, wiſe, and good; and our Parliaments proudly independent. Faction ſhall rear its head no more. The French have worked a moſt glorious change; and Mr. Pitt may in future repoſe in ſecurity.

Many

Many who were converted by the patriotic language you formerly held, may aſk, if it would be very unreaſonable in the people to deſire a farther reduction of uſeleſs, and expenſive offices? Lord John Cavendiſh, of a family proverbially good-natured, and himſelf the beſt tempered man in the world, once declared that the King's Miniſters who had plunged this nation in ſuch a load of debt, and had expoſed it to ſo much diſgrace, ought to pay part of the intereſt of that debt, by loſing their fortunes. After this declaration two of them retired with honours, and ſinecures. You, Sir, who are now tremblingly alive all over at the very idea of complaint, or reform, were once the loudeſt amongſt the diſcontented in England. Shall I make no allowance for men who retain ſentiments, even if they ſhould be erroneous, becauſe you who inſtilled them into the public, have thought proper to abandon them?

The people, as you told us, in the American war, ſtill *reſpect* that freedom, which they *once adored*. Shall it be deemed criminal amongſt us, who ſtill *adore* the goddeſs, to rejoice becauſe thirty millions of people have a proſpect of enjoying life, liberty, and property hereafter? What a perverſion of ſplendid talents has the world beheld in Mr. Burke! The French never had a conſtitution. Their civil wars were merely the ſtruggles of petty tyrants againſt a deſpot. They have at leaſt a proſpect of acquiring

acquiring a conſtitution now, and it is criminal in an Engliſhman to pray for their ſucceſs.

And though the breath of complaint has never been uttered againſt the Britiſh Government in India by one of the thirty millions under our dominion, you have diſcovered that every ſpecies of abuſe, corruption, and oppreſſion has ſubſiſted for years in that country. Nay, ſo completely have you ſhut your ears to conviction, that you will neither give credit to the people themſelves, nor to thoſe who have ſpent their lives amongſt them.

The people will, I believe, long retain their affection for Parliaments; but at times they have very juſtly, in my opinion, reprobated the conduct of a Parliament.

The Houſe that impeached Lord Somers voted themſelves to be infallible. When a Lord told them a plain truth, they voted that he had uttered falſe, and ſcandalous expreſſions. The Grand Jury of Kent preſented what the Commons called an inſolent and ſeditious Petition; but when William the Third diſſolved them, the public had but one opinion of their proceedings. By what criterion, Sir, ſhall we judge of Right, or Wrong? or do things change their qualities as you change your opinions? In 1781, the Houſe then ſitting would ſupport Lord North, as you ſaid, "as long as he could "find money to bribe Gentlemen to ſay they believed

"him." In 1783, "it was the beſt Parliament that the "country had ever been bleſſed with." In 1784, the ſtruggle between this beſt of all Parliaments, and the King, came to a point. They had done all that voting could effect, in order to turn out the Miniſter; they had addreſſed the Crown; they had remonſtrated; and at length the Appeal was made to the people, under an explicit declaration from you, and your friends, that Mr. Pitt, by the mode he had got into power, had violated the beſt principles of this conſtitution. I preſume you think ſo ſtill. The people nineteen to one thought differently; and all the Diſſenters did then, what they have done upon every great occaſion ſince the happy acceſſion of his Majeſty's Family to the Crown, they ſupported his Government. Poſſibly a recollection of this event may have ſharpened your reſentment on the preſent occaſion. Shall any man in England be ſuſpected of a want of affection to Parliaments, becauſe he ſees much in the conduct of the laſt Houſe to reprobate? If there is one man who thinks the country poſſeſſes reſources enough for paying the intereſt of our debt without extending the Exciſe Laws, that man muſt call that extenſion, a ſerious oppreſſion. Is there any man, however anxious he may be, as every man muſt be, that the power of impeachment ſhould ever be retained, who will not agree that it ought not to be abuſed, and turned to private purpoſes? Is there any one man who will affirm, that, in the caſe of Mr. Haſtings, that power was not groſsly abuſed? Is there no diſtinction to

be made between the impeachment of a man for acts which ſhall be defined, and ſeparately voted, and leaving it to a few perſons, to inſert juſt what they pleaſe? Is it not a ſerious oppreſſion, that ſo powerful a body as a Houſe of Commons ſhould ſend into a Court of Juſtice thirteen voluminous Articles, the ſize of a Half-Crown Pamphlet, and containing three hundred criminal allegations, not one of which they ever read? Is it not a monſtrous injuſtice, that they ſhould have paſſed the remaining ſeven in the groſs, having merely voted that in each of them there was ſomething impeachable, though a very eſſential diſtinction was taken by the leading men in the Houſe as to what that ſomething was? There are not five men in England who will deny theſe to be moſt monſtrous oppreſſions, which call aloud for remedy. But there may be many thouſands who will give no credit to the facts I ſtate, becauſe they are ſo enormous, that they cannot believe them to be true, vithout a very full inveſtigation.

The Parliament that was diſſolved in 1784, attempted to change the conſtitution, that conſtitution under which we have ſo long flouriſhed; at leaſt ſo the people thought. The laſt Parliament preferred that ſort of impeachment, which differed from all others that ever were heard of. It was ſo multifarious, that the object of their attack was abſolutely at the mercy of their managers. There was enough in the budget to laſt half a century, under ſuch an adept in amplification as Mr. Edmund Burke; and accordingly

every barrier that the conſtitution had fixed for the ſecurity of the ſubject, was broken down—Magna Charta, the Bill of Rights, the Reſolution of Parliament, "that every ſubject of England, under any "accuſation, whether by impeachment or otherwiſe, "had an undoubted right to be brought to a ſpeedy "trial, in order to be acquitted or condemned."

Poſſibly, Sir, with a portion of that wit with which you are ſo amply gifted, you may tell me, that the late Houſe acted up to the *Letter* of that reſolution, by bringing Mr. Haſtings to a *ſpeedy* trial;—but the world will agree with me when I affirm, that they acted in direct oppoſition to the *Spirit* of it, when they allowed it to go on for three years. Dreadful indeed is the precedent! For ſuch an evil our anceſtors did not provide, becauſe no man could have foreſeen it, until it happened.

Vain, I believe, will be every attempt to excite diſcontents amongſt the People of England. They are the only Freemen upon the earth; and they know the value of the bleſſings they enjoy. If they feel oppreſſion at all, it is that oppreſſion which ariſes from the weight of their taxes; of taxes, which no change in the repreſentation can deliver them from. If they feel reſentment and indignation, it is from reflecting upon the groſs deceits that have at times been practiſed upon them. It is from reflecting, that men who have for many years called themſelves the friends of the people, and were ſolemnly

lemnly pledged to trace the calamities they had ſuffered to their true ſource, in violation of that promiſe united, with their opponents, in ſtorming the King's Cloſet, and ſeizing the Government. The people allow, indeed, that you HAVE given them an Impeachment; but as the man you ſelected neither added an hundred millions to their debt, nor diſmembered the Britiſh empire, that trial has tended more, perhaps, than any other circumſtance, to ſhew the people of what wretched materials, a patriot is compoſed.

When Mr. Sheridan vainly ſounded the trumpet of alarm through the country, and deſcribed that many-headed monſter Exciſe to be what it really is, do you conceive that the people did not feel its extenſion to be a grievance? Their opinions are not changed. Their zeal for liberty is as ſtrong now as in the time of Sir Robert Walpole, but our debt was then not a fifth of its preſent amount; and it is agreed by men of all parties and all deſcriptions, that the intereſt upon it muſt be honorably diſcharged, and its amount if poſſible diminiſhed. But why, Sir, do I ſay this to you, the convert to my fixed opinions? We are agreed, that the people are happy and proſperous, and that it is the duty of every honeſt man to ſupport Miniſters, unleſs they act very abſurdly indeed.

In the late American war, two very celebrated men wielded the gooſe quill of controverſy:—Doctor Price in ſupport of the Americans, their cauſe being

ing that of Civil Liberty; Dean Tucker, the Caſſandra of Great Britain, in defence of the Rights of his Country, or of what he believed to be their Rights. You, Mr. Burke, thought and acted with the former, and charitably ſuppoſed the honeſt Dean not to write from conviction, but for a mitre. You felt none of thoſe alarms then, that now diſturb your repoſe. But that time was infinitely more dangerous than the preſent. The Americans were Republicans *on principle*. They had their emiſſaries every where. They were avowedly ſupported by men of the firſt talents and fortunes in the nation. You, "the citizen of a particular ſtate, and bound "up in a conſiderable degree *by its public will*,"* openly reſiſted *that will*; becauſe what the *Law* termed a *Rebellion*, you in your private judgement deemed, to be a *Juſtifiable Reſiſtance*.

The ſentiments of the Univerſity of Oxford, inſpired you *then* † with ſo much alarm, that you publicly reprobated them in the Houſe, as improper to be inſtilled into the minds of the riſing generation; yet all they contended for was, to preſerve the Conſtitutional Rights of Great Britain; and upon the principles you *now* profeſs, you ought to have gone beyond that learned Seminary, in the ſupport of Lord North.

Let me trouble you with one more extract, to ſhew how much your opinions are changed.

* Page 6, of Mr. Burke's Pamphlet.

† In 1776.

Page 128 of Mr. Burke's Reflections, *publiſhed in* 1790—" We have real hearts of fleſh and blood " beating in our boſoms! We look up *with awe to* " *Kings, with affection to Parliaments,* with reverence " to Prieſts, *and with reſpect to Nobility!*"

Mr. Burke's ſpeech on the reform in the expenditure of the public money, *publiſhed in* 1780, page 68—" Kings are naturally lovers of low company. " They are ſo elevated above all the reſt of man- " kind, that they muſt look upon all their ſubjects " as on a level; they are rather apt to hate than " love their nobility, on account of the occaſional " reſiſtance to their will, which will be made by " their virtue, their petulance, or their pride. It " muſt, indeed, be admitted, that many of the no- " bility are *as perfectly willing* to act the part of flat- " terers, tale-bearers, paraſites, pimps, and buffoons, " as any of the loweſt and vileſt of mankind can be. " But they are not properly qualified for this object " of their ambition. The want of a regular educa- " tion, and early habits, and ſome luke-warm re- " mains of their dignity will never permit them to " become a match for an Italian eunuch, a mounte- " bank, a fidler, a player, or any regular practi- " tioner of that tribe. The Roman Emperors, al- " moſt from the beginning, threw themſelves into " ſuch hands, and the miſchief increaſed every day, " till its decline and final ruin. It is therefore of " very great importance, (provided the thing is not " over done) to contrive ſuch an eſtabliſhment, as

" muſt,

" muſt, almoſt, whether a prince will or not, bring " into daily, and hourly, offices about his perſon, " a great number of his firſt nobility; and it is ra- " ther an uſeful prejudice that gives them a pride in " ſuch a ſervitude. Though they are not much the " better for a Court, a Court will be much the bet- " ter for them. I have therefore not attempted to " reform any of the officers of honour about the " King's perſon."

Whatever the *people* may do, no gentleman reading this Extract, will think that Mr. Burke looks up, *with awe to Kings, or with reſpect to Nobility.*

The next is " *affection to Parliaments.*"

Page 92 of Mr. Burke's ſpeech on the Reform Bill—

" We have furniſhed to the people of England, " *(indeed we have) ſome real cauſe of jealouſy.* Let us " have that ſort of company, which if it does not de- " ſtroy our innocence, *pollutes our honour*, &c.

I confine myſelf here to ſpeeches that you have deliberately publiſhed yourſelf; but to any man who has at all attended to the public proceedings, it muſt be clear, that from your entrance into public life, you ſupported what is called the popular part of our conſtitution. I believe both Whigs and Tories to be true and loyal ſubjects to the King; but the Whigs have undoubtedly endeavoured to conciliate the people upon all occaſions, more than the Tories have

have done; and, without entering far into your reaſoning upon the principles on which the Revolution was founded: I may ſtate what you know to be true, that both Tory Lords, and Commons, at that period were very much puzzled how to reconcile the Revolution, to the high doctrines of paſſive obedience, and non-reſiſtance which the church had promulgated during the latter part of Charles the ſecond's reign, and the two firſt years of his ſucceſſors. I rather think Lord Somers ſtudied more how to appeaſe tender conſciences, than how he ſhould reconcile the Revolution to the principles of the Britiſh Conſtitution.

There is not, I am confident, an opinion you have held, a doctrine that you have ſupported through a long political life, which your preſent pamphlet does not contradict; and there never was a politician to whom the *Argumentum ad Hominem* could be applied ſo ſtrongly as to yourſelf.

This, however, would not be a ground for animadverting upon your work, if I ſaw that danger in the Revolution Society which you ſeem to apprehend. Such of that body as are Diſſenters, have been ſo from father to ſon for many generations. I have proved to you, that upon all great occaſions they have ſupported the King and the Conſtitution. Of our Church Government they cannot approve, or they would not be Diſſenters. But do their opinions gain ground? Does their ſect increaſe? Certainly

not. I believe the reverſe is the truth. If they abhor Popery, Slavery, and Wooden Shoes, is our conſtitution built upon ſo rotten a foundation that theſe people may not proclaim that abhorrence in leſs courtly language than Mr. Burke would uſe? This country, ninety-nine to one, nay nine hundred and ninety-nine to one, is devoted to a Monarchy as limited by law, at the time of the Revolution. But in ſpeculative points the differences of opinion are great. The Miniſters of George the Firſt would have limited the Peerage. The Miniſter of George the Third would have altered the Repreſentation. The firſt ſtruck at an important prerogative of the Crown, the laſt would have deſtroyed what the wiſdom of ages had ſanctified. I ſee no danger at all from the fair diſcuſſion of any ſubject whatever, that wars not with virtue and religion.

You allow that the French Revolution is an event upon which no man can look with indifference. Shall we not rejoice in this country, when that ſort of change is made by which a community is freed from the diſgrace of holding their lives and fortunes, poſſibly at the diſcretion of a Valet de Chambre, or a Waiting Maid? Shall we be ſurprized that men who have burſt ſuch bonds aſunder, ſhall for a time, loſe liberty in licentiouſneſs? Or ſhall we wonder, that, reaſoning upon events, of which the beſt informed amongſt us have bad information, Engliſhmen ſhould think and ſpeak very differently? Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Courtenay, avowedly

differ with you upon this point; and ſo I believe does every Gentleman who profeſſes to be the friend of rational liberty.

Miſerable, indeed, is the deſcription which you have given us of France. Miſerable are the deſcriptions which you have given us of our own country. Have you, Sir, totally forgotten every former occurrence of a long political life? I will not teize you by many quotations. I will, however, venture to give you two, that the world may know what your opinion was of the Britiſh Miniſter, and of a Britiſh Parliament, leſs than ſix years ago.

"Let no man hereafter talk of the decaying ener-
"gies of nature; all the acts and monuments in the
"records of peculation, the conſolidated corrup-
"tion of ages, the patterns of exemplary plunder
"in the heroic times of Roman iniquity, never
"equalled the gigantic corruption of this ſingle
"act. Never did Nero, in all the inſolent prodi-
"gality of deſpotiſm, deal out to his Prætorian
"guards a donation fit to be named with the largeſs
"ſhowered down by our Chancellor of the Ex-
"chequer * on the faithful band of his Indian
"ſepoys."

Why, Sir, there is not a ſublimer paſſage than this in the book before me.

* Mr. Pitt.

Again you ſay, " Your Miniſters * knew when " they ſigned the death warrant of the Carnatic, " that the Nabob would not only turn all the un- " fortunate farmers of revenue out of employment, " but he has denounced his ſevereſt vengeance " againſt them for acting under Britiſh authority. " With a knowledge of this diſpoſition, a Britiſh " Chancellor of the Exchequer and Treaſurer of " the Navy, incited by no public advantage, im- " pelled by no public neceſſity, in a ſtrain of the " moſt wanton perfidy which has ever ſtained the an- " nals of mankind, have delivered over to plunder, " impriſonment, exile, and death itſelf, according " to the mercy of ſuch execrable tyrants, the un- " happy and deluded ſouls, who, untaught by uni- " form example, were ſtill weak enough to put " their truſt in Engliſh faith."—*Mr. Burke's Speech of the 14th of February, 1785. Printed by Dodſley.*

Thoſe gentlemen who happen to differ from you as to French politics, may ſolace themſelves by reflecting, that however finely turned your periods may be, the people of England will be more ready to believe what you ſhall prove, than what you ſhall ſay :—for if Mr. Pitt has merited ſuch a a character as you have given of him, he is indeed the " Captain-General of Iniquity," and ſhould be hunted out of ſociety.

* Lord Sydney, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Dundas, Mr. Grenville, Lord Mulgrave, and Lord Walſingham.

And theſe, Sir, are not the mere rants of an orator; they are your own ſentiments delivered to the world in a book publiſhed by yourſelf, after many months conſideration. Is it utterly impoſſible for you to become a few years hence the panegyriſt of Mirabeau? Events more extraordinary have happened in my time.

The aſhes of the dead have been diſturbed in France, as you tell us, to render the clergy odious; "and the Archbiſhop of Paris has been compelled "to fly from his flock, becauſe truly in the ſixteenth "century the Cardinal of Loraine was a rebel and a "murderer."

You cannot condemn theſe Tribunitian contrivances more than I do; but were I to name the man in all Europe who has carried theſe deteſtable tricks to the moſt unwarrantable lengths, I ſhould ſay it was Mr. Edmund Burke. Have the French raked up the aſhes of the dead, that they may oppreſs the living? So, Sir, have you. When they determined to rob the church, they publiſhed the iniquities and the crimes of churchmen as hiſtorians, whether truly or falſely, have related them. But you went far, very far beyond the National Aſſembly. You affixed upon the memory of a man who periſhed in the cauſe of his country above twenty-ſeven years ago a calumny of the foulеſt nature; and this you did, in order to excite the public indignation againſt a man upon his trial for acts with which the fact you related had not the moſt diſtant connection.

nection. Have the French, in any one inſtance, acted ſo unjuſtifiably? And well indeed may they contemn us, if the authority of the Houſe of Commons ſhall be ſo uſed. What muſt they ſay, when they know that a man in their name told a Court of Juſtice, that the ſon of the Nabob Meer Jaffier was ſaid to be ſtruck dead by lightning in the calmeſt and the ſtilleſt night, when there was not a cloud in the heavens; and without directly affirming the fact, impreſſed his audience with the belief that he was not deſtroyed by lightning, but baſely murdered, and that the Commander in Chief, and Mr. Luſhington, a gentleman who was killed ſeven and twenty years ago, had authorized ſo foul a deed? What ſhall they ſay when they are informed, that there are many gentlemen now in England who were in the camp in the night when Meeran was killed? What ſhall they ſay when they are told, that Colonel Ironſide, an intimate acquaintance of Mr. Burke, was one of the number? What ſhall they ſay when they are told, that all theſe gentlemen affirm in the moſt ſolemn manner, that of all the tempeſtuous nights they have known during a long reſidence in India, they do not remember a more dreadful ſtorm of thunder and lightning, wind and rain, than poured upon them that night? What ſhall they ſay when they are told, that half the tents of the camp were blown down by the violence of the ſtorm, and that not one of them ever entertained a ſuſpicion ſo diſhonourable to the character of Mr. Luſhington as Mr. Burke threw out in the name of the Houſe of Commons,

Commons, the firſt aſſembly in the world? What ſhall they ſay when they are told, that ſuch a ſuſpicion was never entertained by any man in India? And what ſhall we ſay to a man who ſtates as a fact, what a hundred witneſſes can prove was notoriouſly falſe; and follows that falſe fact by inſinuations, that a man ſo many years deceaſed was guilty of a foul and atrocious murder?

I proteſt to you, Sir, I can ſee nothing in the conduct of the National Aſſembly more contrary to the firſt principles of juſtice, more repugnant to the feelings of a man of honour, or more ſhocking to humanity, than certain proceedings in the trial of Mr. Haſtings, and this foul calumny uttered againſt the fair fame of the late Mr. Luſhington, for the paltry purpoſe of diſcrediting a whole body of men, amongſt whom Mr. Haſtings is but a ſingle individual, exceeds in iniquity any thing you have related againſt the National Aſſembly, for their conduct to the church.

You have managed ſo to purify the Houſe of Commons, by the expulſion of contractors, and by overturning other parts of that monſtrous ſyſtem of corruption introduced by your new friend Lord Guildford, (as *you* ſay) that you have but one fear remaining.—"All will go well as long as the Breakers of law in "India can be kept from becoming the Makers of "law in England." It is ſomething remarkable, that after having had the honour and character of

the Houſe of Commons at your complete diſpoſal for more than three years, you ſhould never yet have eſtabliſhed the truth of the fact, which you aſſume, as if it was undiſputed.

There is one event, and but one, in which the Engliſhmen who have been in India, whether they broke or preſerved the laws there, took a very active and ſucceſsful part: and that was, in oppoſing with their utmoſt induſtry that ſyſtem, which they firmly believed to be yours, and which was condemned in the ſtrongeſt poſſible manner by the King, by the Lords, *and by the People*; without whoſe aſſiſtance our gracious Sovereign muſt have ſubmitted to a domineering Ariſtocracy. That your zeal ſhould outrun your diſcretion whenever this ſubject comes acroſs your imagination, I am not ſurprized; and that Mr. Haſtings has ſuffered for the activity of his friends upon that occaſion, is now tolerably clear to the whole world. But allow me to tell you, Sir, that the clauſe which you introduced in your own bill, and which ſtill I ſee plays before your fancy, was to the full as unjuſt as any thing you lay to the charge of the National Aſſembly. *Prima Facie*, the Gentlemen of India have a merit, which thoſe with whom you are leagued cannot boaſt. They have neither diſmembered the empire, nor have they plunged the nation into a debt of ſuch a magnitude, that it is more alarming to national liberty, than any ſentiments that may flow from Dr. Price. Compoſed, as the Houſe of Commons is, many members notoriouſly

rioufly the repreſentatives of Dukes, Marquiſſes, Earls, Viſcounts, and Barons, why ſhould any one part of the monied intereſt of the country be excluded? As far as England is undone, it has been ruined by the Country Gentlemen, who, with the beſt intentions in the world, ſupported Lord North in the proſecution of the American war, until a national bankruptcy was apprehended. This fact I ſtate upon your authority, and it is notoriouſly true.

If a man has property, he has a right to be a candidate for a ſeat in Parliament. If he has obtained that property by illegal means, let the law lay hold of him. But to throw out theſe malicious inſinuations upon all occaſions, to go out of your way to do it, is equally unjuſt and ungenerous, as it was to threaten Lord North year after year with an impeachment, in order to intimidate him into a compromiſe. Such conduct, Sir, makes an honeſt man ſick of public life. It has reduced oppoſition, which always ought be reſpectable, to contempt.

Your doctrines are exceedingly favourable to a Miniſter; and as I wiſh to ſee a good Government ſupported, I confeſs to you that many of them I much approve. But were I to think, as you profeſs to do of the Miniſtry, I ſhould entertain a very different opinion indeed. Such doctrines would have made you a Jacobite in the reign of James the Second. Such doctrines cannot be heard with pa-

tience by thoſe who have a bad opinion of the preſent Miniſter; or may conſcientiouſly think, as many do, that without touching the prerogatives of the King, or forcibly entering into his kitchen, ſome parts of our conſtitution may be improved.

That the Book is calculated to ſtrengthen the hands of that Adminiſtration which it has been the employment of ſome years of your life to pull down, I freely allow.

The doctrine of the Conſtitution, according to my opinion, is, that his Majeſty has a right to chuſe, and to diſmiſs his own Miniſters. The doctrine of Mr. Burke, as delivered in a pamphlet, called, "Thoughts on the preſent Diſcontents," was, that the country ought to be governed by a party—by family connections:—that it was ſo governed in the reign of Queen Anne for many years. This is the true Rockingham Creed; and they acted upon it in 1783, when, being too weak themſelves to overturn the King's Miniſter, they extended their connection, they did not borrow a majority as the late Mr. Pitt once confeſſed he had done from the Duke of Newcaſtle, but they bargained for one, and the price paid was, a diviſion of all the offices of Government, with their bittereſt enemies.

Before the nation had recovered from the ſurprize into which ſuch an union had thrown them, the deed was done. Mr. Pitt has no ſuch combinations to

dread

dread in future. His repoſe in Parliament will not be diſturbed, at leaſt by the ſame perſons. New combinations may be formed; but the Coalition is gone for ever; thoſe general principles of union, that fidelity of attachment which, as Mr. Sheridan told us, drew applauſe even from the enemies of Oppoſition, is ever gone, never to return. Avaunt, ye Whig Clubs! ye Weſtminſter Meetings! ye Revolution Societies! Dare not, I charge ye, Engliſhmen, again to talk or think of public men, or public meaſures, leſt ſome amongſt you ſhould preſume to hint your diſapprobation of a Miniſter's conduct, and to doubt whether you are ſo proſperous, and ſo happy, as Mr. Burke repreſents you to be.

The true cauſe of the revolution in France you have fairly ſtated, I think—"Nations are wading "deeper and deeper into an ocean of boundleſs "debts. Public debts, which at firſt were a ſecu- "rity to government, by intereſting many in the "public tranquillity, are likely in their exceſs to be- "come the means of their ſubverſion. If govern- "ment provide for theſe debts, by heavy impoſi- "tions, they periſh, by becoming odious to the "people. If they do not provide for them, "they will be undone by the efforts of the moſt "dangerous of all parties; I mean an extenſive "diſcontented monied intereſt, injured and not "deſtroyed, with a debt of above two hundred and "forty millions, and taxed in every poſſible ſhape."

The real diſtinction between this kingdom and France before its revolution, is this:—We have run deeply into debt, ſo deeply, that I believe it was once your opinion, that a national bankruptcy was inevitable. This debt, is the debt of the people, contracted by the adoption of meaſures of which *they* approved; for whether it be poſſible or not to amend the repreſentation, this I know, that no Miniſter can long carry on a war, through the medium of the Houſe of Commons, *contrary to the wiſhes of the people.* It was the *change* of public opinion, that firſt made an impreſſion upon a Houſe that had ſupported Lord North for ſo many years; and therefore our debt is in no inſtance to be imputed to his Majeſty, nor even to his Miniſter, unleſs it can be proved that he deceived Parliament. We have ſhewn a laudable ſpirit, to pay honeſtly and fairly thoſe debts, which we abſurdly contracted.—But in France the law was widely different—*their* deficit, the real ſource of the revolution, aroſe from the meaſures adopted by a Monarch, in which *the people had no voice.*—-The American war inſpired them with new ideas; and *Vive le Roi,* yielded to *Vive la Nation.*

Let the proceedings of the Revolution Society be as abſurd as you deſcribe them, they are, as a body, too inconſiderable to attract notice—their committees may correſpond with the French; they may drink the ſovereignty of the people, or an equal repreſentation, in Biſhopſgate Street, while Mr. Fox is toaſting

ing the majeſty of the people in Covent Garden, without diſturbing the decent order, and tranquillity of government. We can have no confidence in men, of whom we entertain no very high opinion.—You cannot ſeriouſly believe, that any ſpeculative opinions promulgated *now*, in the hour of our proſperity, will affect us, when the people withſtood every art uſed to inflame them, at a diſtreſsful period.

Indeed, Mr. Burke, I muſt believe, that loſing your own memory, you conceive the public to have drank of the waters of Lethe alſo. Carry your recollection back, I pray you, to the period of the American war—remember the county meetings, correſponding committees, Mr. Fox's Parliament in Weſtminſter Hall, and the reſolutions taken at the King's Arms, againſt "a wicked and abandoned "adminiſtration, and a corrupt majority in Parlia-"ment."—Remember the encouragement you received by addreſſes from different counties, to perſevere in your Bill of Reform—remember the confidence placed by many people in a perſevering, able, and as they then thought, a virtuous oppoſition; and if all theſe circumſtances could not ſhake an unfortunate, and an indolent Adminiſtration, much more produce an innovation in our admirable frame of government; what in theſe days of confidence in Miniſters, and impaſſioned loyalty to our Sovereign, can be expected from a few intemperate

rate expreſſions (admitting them to deſerve that epithet) in the ſermon of a diſſenting miniſter, almoſt ſinking into the grave, under the weight of years, and infirmities!

What is the honeſt ſentiment of the people of England upon the French Revolution?—We are ſorry, they ſay, for the fallen ſtate of the King and Queen, and we feel for the diſtreſſes of the nobility; but what buſineſs had they to interfere between us and America? and with theſe ſentiments, they leave them to ſettle their own government.

I muſt, therefore, look beyond the cauſe you have aſſigned. The Revolution Society, as a body, would not have attracted your notice unleſs there had been other circumſtances, connected with their conduct.

Every man in the kingdom knows the violent part you took in the debates upon the Regency.—I, who have the honour to belong to many clubs in this town, and who have mixed very much with men of all ranks and parties, believe, upon tolerable information, that every ſtep taken by you during that period, was cenſured by thoſe with whom you acted. You well know the ground you loſt with the public, and there muſt have been ſome foundation for the reports that we heard of diſſen-

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tions amongſt your friends,* when Mr. Fox left the army without a General.

After the providential recovery of His Majeſty, the impeachment (that mill-ſtone about the neck of your party) was reſumed—it was dragged on through the ſeſſion, commencing with a ſpeech of four days from Mr. Burke, and proceeding with almoſt daily diſputes upon evidence, and continual references to the judges of the land. The ground you and the party loſt with the public by this protraction, you were well aware of. The prorogation in 1789, left Mr. Pitt in full poſſeſſion of power, and oppoſition as low, in public opinion, as men of their talents could be. On the next meeting in January of this year, a noble Viſcount, who moved the addreſs, very imprudently in my opinion, alluded to the confuſed ſtate of the French government. Here was the favourable moment for you: On the firſt opportunity you went very fully into the affairs of France, and forced your friends, Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan, (who, "if they have faults to Heaven, have none to you") to differ from you; the latter with ſo much vehemence, that it produced as vehement a reply, and a ſolemn declaration, that you were ſeparated in politics for ever. Could ſuch violence have proceeded from ſo trifling a cauſe? The ſeeds of this ill humour were ſown, when both of you were almoſt at the door of the two pay of-

* New Annual Regiſter for 1789.

fices, naval and military. From that moment all confidence has been at an end. Mr. Pitt, (who acted with political wiſdom in ſo doing) took care to expreſs his ſentiments very plainly, and the Houſe and the public went with him. The conſtitutional language of Mr. Burke was warmly applauded—its inconſiſtency with all his former opinions was not noticed—and it muſt have given ſome ſatisfaction to the Miniſter, to ſee a public difference between Mr. Burke and Mr. Sheridan, on a fundamental point.

You then tried your credit with the late Parliament to the utmoſt; on one day you gave notice, that in conſequence of ſome extraordinary deciſions in Weſtminſter Hall (by the Judges of England) you ſhould bring forward a motion relative to the trial of Mr. Haſtings.

Abandoning every thing of this kind, and without once alluding to thoſe extraordinary deciſions, you made two motions; the firſt, that the managers ſhould abandon as many of the articles, as they ſhould pleaſe; but without giving up the truth or importance of them—the ſecond, that the Houſe were bound to perſevere in the impeachment, until judgement could be obtained upon important articles of the ſame.

And this dying Houſe of Commons (which had been proſecuting the impeachment three complete years, and knowing, as every individual member did,

did, that it was at Death's door) voted your reſolutions, and lived but thirty days longer. Can I prove there was management in all this? Certainly I cannot; but I may conjecture there was, with much more propriety than you conceived that Mr. Pitt ordered the debts of the Nabob of Arcot to be paid, that the friends of Mr. Atkinſon might be franked into Parliament.

Good may ſometimes be produced by evil.—The impeachment of Mr. Haſtings, has been to him, a moſt grievous oppreſſion—it has deeply affected the firſt, the vital principle of the Britiſh Conſtitution, by which equal and ſpeedy juſtice is promiſed to all; but it has ſhown to what deſperate lengths the ſpirit of party and injuſtice will carry men; and thoſe perſons who commenced this trial with compliments as fulſome and diſguſting the one to the other, as their abuſe of the defendant was coarſe and unmanly, are now ſeparated in politics for ever. The juſtice of Heaven is diſplayed when a man is made the inſtrument of diſgracing thoſe who have diſhonoured themſelves by ſupporting him againſt every principle of reaſon and common ſenſe. But they have received their fate from the hand that ſhould not have dealt the blow; to you they have been generous to a fault, and they now ſuffer for it. You, Mr. Burke, have publicly contradicted every principle that you profeſſed through life—your old aſſociates profeſſing to differ from you, feel the diſcredit that you have brought upon the party, and

the public, with one voice, exclaims, " What is " patriotism but a name!"

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

A Member of the Revolution Society.

Nov. 6, 1790.

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